

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARROW) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BARROW addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Asian American and Pacific Islander community and to commemorate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

As Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, CAPAC, I feel privileged to be here tonight to speak of the history and accomplishments of the Asian American and Pacific Islander, AAPI, community.

Additionally, I will be highlighting those issues affecting our community that are also priorities for CAPAC.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge and remember extraordinary community activists, advocates, leaders, and long-time friends of the AAPI community that we have lost this year, such as Fred Korematsu, Dr. John B. Tsu, K. Patrick Okura, Iris Chang, and my colleague and friend, Congressman Bob Matsui.

Thanks to the late Representative Frank Horton from New York and my good friend, Secretary Norman Mineta, along with Senators DANIEL INOUE and Spark Matsunaga, May is designated as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month to celebrate and honor the contributions of the Asian and Pacific Islander community.

The first 10 days of May coincide with two important anniversaries: the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants on May 7, 1843, to the United States; and the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869.

In 1992, Congress passed the law that officially designated May of each year

as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

The first AAPI settlement in this country dates to 1763, when Filipinos escaped imprisonment aboard Spanish galleons and established a community near New Orleans. Today, that AAPI community is one of the fastest growing populations in the country, with over 12 million AAPIs living in the U.S. and representing 4.5 percent of the total U.S. population.

My home State of California has both the largest AAPI population, 4.6 million folks, and the largest numerical increase of AAPIs since April of 2000.

Mr. Speaker, this year's theme for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is "Liberty and Freedom For All."

As we honor the AAPI community's contributions to this great Nation, I would also like to note the very social injustices the AAPI community still face. For example, the New York Times today reported a recent study commissioned by the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, a Washington-based civil rights organization.

The study showed that AAPIs portray only 2.7 percent of the regular characters on prime time national network television. Our community is still misrepresented in all areas of society, especially in the media and on prime time television even though we make up 5 percent of the total population.

Although we are often misperceived as monolithic, our community is extremely diverse in our languages, ethnicities, and culture. Aggregating such a large and diverse group makes it difficult to understand the unique problems faced by the individual ethnicities and subgroups such as the Southeast Asian Americans who are refugees who fled their home countries during the late 1970s and the early 1980s.

As a country, we need to better adjust the needs of the AAPI community when we discuss immigration, health, and education issues.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO).

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, as the congressional representative from Guam, it is my honor to join my colleagues in commemorating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I want to thank our chairman, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), the chairman of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, for his outstanding leadership and for organizing this Special Order to recognize the contributions of Asians and Pacific Islander Americans to our Nation.

Today as we celebrate "Liberty and Freedom For All," and as thousands of American servicemen and -women continue to fight the global war on terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan, we are reminded of the sacrifices made to ensure our freedom. We reflect on the thousands of Asian and Pacific Islanders who are serving this country with honor and distinction in very dangerous circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, I especially want to honor those who have given their lives to protect our freedom, including Guam's Army Specialist Christopher Wesley, Lieutenant Michael Vega, Sergeant Eddie Chan, Corporal Jaygee Meluat, and Specialist Jonathan Santos, all servicemen from Guam who were killed in Iraq.

I mention these heroes as a reminder that Americans in the territories stand shoulder to shoulder with their citizens when our Nation calls, and that we will share the burdens and the sacrifices to preserve our freedom.

We remember prominent Asian and Pacific Islander Americans who dedicated their lives to public service, doing their part to promote justice, not just for Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, but for all Americans. Tonight I would like to make special mention of two of our colleagues, the late Congressman Robert Matsui of California who was a staunch advocate for the cause of the disadvantaged, the elderly, and young Americans; and the late Congresswoman Patsy Mink of Hawaii, who was a champion of women's rights and for the poor. Each has left a legacy that lives on in those whose lives they have touched and improved.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is an opportunity to educate our fellow citizens about the history and culture of Asian Pacific Island Americans. Their contribution to America is not just the diverse cultures that they have introduced to this land; it is also their stories of incredible journeys to freedom.

Historically, Asians and Pacific Islanders have known war and strife. They have survived and thrived to the benefit of America. They have a powerful story to tell, and they have a love for this Nation that many of us today take for granted.

This year, the people of Guam will commemorate the 61st anniversary of our islands' liberation by the United States Armed Forces during World War II. As the only American territory with a civilian population occupied by the enemy during World War II, Guamanians risked their lives due to their loyalty to America, and endured great hardship and brutality. During this dark period in Guam's history, our people experienced beatings, executions, massacres, beatings, torture, rape, forced labor, forced marches, and internment in concentration camps. I want to recognize the survivors of the occupation of Guam for their courage, their sacrifice and steadfast loyalty to our great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago, a Federal commission was tasked by Congress to examine whether the people of Guam received equal treatment in the handling of war claims as compared to their fellow citizens.

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The Guam War Claims Review Commission reported in June 2004 that there was indeed a lack of parity and

that Congress should enact legislation to remedy this injustice. The report stated, "The Review Commission affirms that there is a moral obligation on the part of our national government to pay compensation for war damages, in order to ensure that to the extent possible, that no single individual or group of individuals bears more than a just part of the overall burden of war."

With the support of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I have introduced legislation, H.R. 1595, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, with 75 sponsors, to implement the recommendations of the Review Commission. I urge my colleagues to help us bring closure to this issue for the people of Guam. Let us finally grant recognition to some of the finest patriots America has ever produced, and let us commend the people of Guam for their sacrifices for our Nation during the wartime occupation of our island.

As we commend Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, let us honor the contributions of all Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. Let us celebrate the cultural diversity, the patriotism, and the Asian and Pacific Islander communities that make America so great.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD).

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I am honored tonight to have this opportunity to pay tribute to Asian and Pacific Islander Americans during this month when we honor their great heritage.

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans constitute one of the fastest growing minority communities in the United States, and I am proud to say that they are a significant part of my constituency in southern California while they represent over 13 million Asian and Pacific Islander Americans who live in this United States. It is estimated by the year 2050, they will comprise about 33.4 million, or 8 percent of our total population.

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have made tremendous contributions to our society. They are government leaders, scientists, lawyers, athletes, business men and women, artists, soldiers, advocates for civil rights and champions for the underrepresented. As we celebrate this glorious month, let us remember some of the notable Asian and Pacific Islander Americans who have served our Nation with honor and distinction:

Kalpna Chawla, who became the first Indian-American woman astronaut, who, while pursuing her dreams, perished in the Columbia shuttle disaster;

Fred Korematsu, a Japanese American who, for decades, fought tirelessly for civil rights;

Yuan T. Lee, a Taiwanese American who shared the Nobel peace prize in 1986 for his work in chemistry;

And, of course, my dear friend, the Honorable Patsy Mink, the first Asian-

American woman and first woman to grace this august body. She has left an indelible mark that gave her the honor of distinguished;

Haing Ngor, the first Cambodian American to win an academy award for his role in the film "The Killing Fields."

And let us acknowledge the great Members of Congress who make up this august body who are Asian American and Pacific Islanders:

The Honorable MIKE HONDA, who is the caucus chair of our caucus;

The Honorable DAVID WU;

The Honorable BOBBY SCOTT;

And, newly, the Honorable DORIS MATSUI.

And let us not forget and pay tribute to our dear friend and colleague, the late Congressman Robert Matsui who recently passed away. He was an extraordinary man, Mr. Speaker, who overcame challenges and obstacles and became a great Member of this body. He will be remembered as a national champion of all Americans, particularly our seniors and Social Security.

Despite hardships and discrimination, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have maintained an abiding and unwavering belief in the promise of our country and they have moved forward to make remarkable contributions to our Nation. I am proud to stand with them tonight as a member of the Asian Pacific Islander Caucus.

This time of tribute is also a time of celebration and reflection upon where we have been and where we are going as a Nation, ever mindful that liberty and freedom for all must be our collective national goal.

Finally, tomorrow I will be introducing a resolution honoring the victims of the Cambodian genocide. I am proud that the largest Cambodian population in the United States resides in my district. Their culture and contribution, along with all Asian and Pacific Americans, have enriched our community and this American landscape. We are a better country because of their contributions.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE).

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus so ably led by the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) to join my colleagues in commemorating our Asian Pacific American community at the outset of APA Heritage Month.

And I do so with deep respect, great pride, humble appreciation and eager anticipation. Respect, for the great challenges generations of Asians and Pacific Americans have faced in our country and overcome and still face and will overcome. Pride, for the profound role my own Hawaii, has played in the nurturance and maturation of our APA communities throughout our country. Appreciation, for the rich tapestry APAs have woven in the fabric of our national identity. And anticipation, for what certainly lies ahead for

our APA communities in writing the next great chapters in the ongoing narrative of this great country.

Mr. Speaker, nowhere in our country is the story of Americans of Asian and Pacific Island descent better illustrated than my own Hawaii, where well over 50 percent of our population is Asian and Pacific American, where our Asian and Pacific American community has achieved the pinnacle of success in all facets of local, statewide, national and international life, and where a majority of all marriages and a majority of all children share more now than one ethnicity, more likely than not an ethnicity of the Asian and Pacific Americans.

And the story of APAs in Hawaii is a rich and compelling story which acts as a microcosm of the story of our very country. Of course, it started millennia ago when the ancestors of our indigenous peoples, the native Hawaiians, came to Hawaii from their ancestral homelands to the south, joining other indigenous peoples in the U.S. mainland and Alaska in the original settlement of our country. And it continued in the last 200 years with the great migrations from Japan and China. And in the last 100-plus years, with still further great migrations from Korea and the Philippines. And then in the last half century from the Pacific islands such as Samoa, Tonga, Fiji and Guam. And amazingly it continues since to this day, in the last quarter century, from Vietnam and Cambodia and Laos and the other nations of Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia. And throughout, of course, many, many other immigrants from other Asian and Pacific countries, India and Pakistan and Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, Thailand and Indonesia and Malaysia and much more.

So when we pause to honor the rich and diverse heritage of our APA communities, we honor the capital of the APA world, my Hawaii, a beacon to the world of what can be.

Yet what is throughout our country is not where it can and should be, for there remain challenges aplenty. There is always the specter of racism and discrimination. Yes, less than there was, less overt, less on the surface than it has been, but insidious enough and there enough to flare up with very little warning, a specter against which constant vigilance is required.

And there are still unique challenges in economic and social advancement for the APA community and unique conditions to be addressed in health care and education and other areas. And there are still goals of fundamental fairness to be accomplished with many of our APA communities, most notably, in my case, Federal recognition for our native Hawaiians.

But while we must remember tonight these challenges and what we must do, we also remember all that is good and great in our APA community. Let me give you just one great example, because we remember tonight that hard

on us is the centennial of sustained immigration from the Philippines to our country, the 1906 exodus from the mother country to the sugar plantations of Hawaii, an exodus that accelerated in 1946 and on and now has yielded fully 2.4 million citizens of our country of Philippine descent.

Yes, it will be a great year for the Filipino community of celebration, with barrio fiestas and song and dance and remembrances of the pioneers and those who succeeded on their broad shoulders. But in many ways, what we celebrate tonight is the recognition that for the Filipino-American community, the celebration of their centennial will be a celebration in miniature of the Asian and Pacific American experience in our country, for the story of our APA community is the story of our America, from its earliest beginnings to its latest arrivals, a story still unfolding as, for example, is happening right on the floor of this U.S. House of Representatives, with my congressional page appointment, Awapuhi Dancil of Makawa, Maui, a junior at Kamehameha Schools and undoubtedly, no doubt about it, a leader in the making for the APA community and for our country in the future.

And so this is a story worth telling over and over again as we do here again tonight.

Mahalo and aloha.

Mr. HONDA. Mahalo.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON).

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and to celebrate the lives and accomplishments of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in U.S. history. I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus for organizing this special order. I thank the gentleman very much.

Mr. Speaker, I represent one of the most diverse congressional districts in our Nation, with African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Anglo Americans, each making up about 30 percent of my Los Angeles-based district. Los Angeles' Korea Town, also in my congressional district, is home to 80,000 Asian Americans, who make up roughly 13 percent of my constituency. My congressional district includes Sony Studios, Capital Records, American Film Institute and Raleigh Studios. It is the home of our Nation's and a great deal of the world's entertainment industry. Today, I want to address the need for adequate and accurate representation of Asian Americans in film and television.

Many of my colleagues speaking today have already mentioned the fact that there are over 13 million Asian and Pacific Islanders living in the United States and that by the year 2050, there will be an estimated 33.4 million self-identified Asian Americans in the United States. However, while the Asian American and Pacific Is-

lander communities continue to grow, our Nation's entertainment sector continues to fall behind in recognizing their presence through film and television and their influence in shaping the course of our Nation.

Just last week, the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium released a report called "Lights, Camera, and Little Action," detailing the shortage of Asian-American characters on prime time network television. The report finds that while Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders make up 5 percent of the United States population, they represent only 2.7 percent of regular characters on prime time television. The report also finds that virtually no Asian actors are cast in situation comedies, and the characters they play in dramas tend to have less depth and development than most regulars, with minimal on-screen time and few romantic roles.

For example, programs such as "King of Queens," set in a New York City borough, features no regular Asian characters despite the fact that almost one in five residents of the city are Asian Americans. The show "Charmed" on the network WB also includes no Asian actors, despite being set in San Francisco where a third of the population is Asian American. Such whitewashing of prime time television not only fails to reflect reality, it also denies viewers the opportunity to learn about other cultures and the chance to further cross-cultural understanding and communication.

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And, finally, I think an equally disturbing trend is the study's finding that when AAPIs are depicted on a television show, they are placed in roles that reinforce stereotypes. Let me give the Members an example. While the 2000 U.S. census showed that half of AAPI adults do not have college degrees, all of the Asian American characters on prime time television have professional jobs that often require advanced degrees. These are admittedly very positive portrayals, and many ethnic groups have railed against their negative portrayals in the media as gang members, pimps, drug dealers, and prostitutes. Nonetheless, any ethnic stereotyping by media, even positive stereotyping, tends to eliminate the larger public's understanding of the real conditions of the ethnic group.

Mr. Speaker, the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to the growth and success of this Nation cannot be overstated. The history of their struggle and triumph in the United States must be captured and remembered. One of the most effective means of commemoration is through the accurate portrayal of AAPI characters in film and television that illuminates their hopes, dreams, and struggles. The AAPI communities have played instrumental roles in advancing the freedom and equality of all Americans; yet we do not see their achievements ade-

quately documented and reflected by the media.

Mr. Speaker, in commemorating this year's Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I call on the entertainment industry to further improve their depiction of the AAPI communities and urge everyone to remain vigilant about the roles the media play in capturing the shared heritage of Asian and Pacific Islander communities in our Nation.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) for her presentation, and I will reiterate her admonition to the media in terms of being able to depict Asian American communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on a couple of points before I yield to the gentleman from Oregon. On the issue of immigration, Mr. Speaker, our Nation was founded by immigrants who valued freedom and liberty and who sought to be free from persecution from a tyrant government. Families fled from their home countries to seek refuge in this great Nation because they too believed in liberty, justice, and freedom for all.

AAPI families who seek to be reunited with their families overseas have not seen their dreams come true because of our broken immigration system. Over 1.5 million Asians are caught in the family immigration backlog and immediate family members from overseas wait as long as 10 years to reunite with their families in the U.S.; and if they are a young teenager, by the time they reach 18, they get switched to another line. Mothers and fathers wait to reunite with their children; but due to the long years of waiting, their children may have already reached the age of 18 and their families will have to start the process over again.

As we honor the 40th anniversary of the Immigration Nationality Act of 1965 and the 30th anniversary of the Refugee Act of 1975, we need to remember that our country was founded and created to protect our freedom and civil liberties.

As Chair of CAPAC, we have worked closely with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to speak out against the REAL ID Act. For the AAPI community, the REAL ID will make it harder for those seeking asylum to prove their case. This will prevent legitimate asylum seekers from obtaining relief in the United States. The REAL ID Act requires asylum applicants to prove that the central motive for their persecution was race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. The REAL ID Act ignores the fact that those who flee brutal human rights abuses often escape from situations that preclude gathering of documentation to present "corroborating evidence." Applicants may be denied based on any inconsistencies or inaccuracies in their stories. An escapee from the Darfur region cannot go back and track evidence of their persecution without facing a life threatening situation.

Therefore, I believe we need comprehensive immigration reform to fix

our broken immigration system, not a national ID that continues the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU).

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for his leadership in organizing this Special Order tonight and for his leadership in chairing the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and pleasure that I join with my fellow members of the Asian Pacific American Caucus in celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. This month marks the 27th time America has recognized and celebrated the many contributions and achievements of Asian Pacific Americans.

Our country was founded as a Nation of immigrants. America has reached its greatness in part by the accumulation of ideas from those with varied heritage and backgrounds. In particular, Asian Pacific Americans have made profound contributions to American life, including the arts, education, science, technology, politics, and athletics. Asian Pacific Americans were here to help build the transcontinental railroad, to serve in the Civil War, and most recently to develop the latest in Internet technology. Asian Pacific Americans have played an active and crucial role in the development of this country from knitting it together, as I mentioned, with the transcontinental railroad, to bringing us closer to the rest of the world through the technologies of the Worldwide Web.

The Asian Pacific American community remains and always will be an integral and vibrant part of American society. As we take part in celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I urge everyone to participate more deeply in the civic life of our Nation. Asian Pacific American civic participation and engagement will help define our collective future. By working together, we can bridge and build upon our great Nation's diverse communities and move forward with determination and unity.

I encourage Congress and the American people to spend part of May absorbing the legacy, culture, and achievements of the Asian Pacific American community.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch on a couple more subjects, if I may.

As Americans, we need to ensure that our children receive a quality education by providing adequate teacher training, funds for after-school and extracurricular activities, and ensuring that college is affordable for every student that desires to receive a higher education.

According to the U.S. census, 50 percent of Asians age 25 or over have a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. However, I would like to emphasize that when we disaggregate the data for AAPI subgroups, we find

that the "model minority" stereotype is, in fact, a myth.

Only 9.1 percent of Cambodian Americans, 7.4 percent Hmong Americans, 7.6 percent Lao Americans, and 19.5 percent Vietnamese Americans and 16 percent of native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who are 25 years and older have a bachelor's degree.

These numbers show that we must do a better job of disaggregating data and information about our communities to assess the needs of those hard-working Americans who still falter behind.

To address the disparities between subgroups of the larger AAPI community, we need Congress to pass the Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions bill, which the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU) will be introducing later this month. This legislation will provide Federal grants to colleges and universities that have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10 percent AAPI and at least 50 percent of its degree-seeking students receive financial assistance.

As a caucus, we will work to increase the availability of loan assistance, scholarships, and programs to allow AAPI students to attend a higher education institution; to ensure full funding for teachers and bilingual education programs under the No Child Left Behind Act; to support English language learners; and to support full funding of minority outreach programs for access to higher education such as the TRIO programs to expand services to serve AAPI students.

In health, Mr. Speaker, a common misperception of AAPIs is that as a group we face fewer health problems than other racial and ethnic groups. In fact, AAPIs as a group and specific populations within this group do experience disparities in health and health care. For example, AAPIs have the highest hepatitis B rates of any racial group in the U.S.

Last week, I, along with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY), introduced a resolution to support the goals and ideals of National Hepatitis B Awareness Week.

AAPIs are also five times more likely to develop cervical and liver cancer than any other ethnic and racial group. According to the Census Bureau, 18 percent of AAPIs went without insurance for the entire year in 2000. This means that the uninsured are not only more likely to go without care for serious medical conditions; they are also more likely to go without routine care, less likely to have a regular source of care, less likely to use preventative services, and have fewer visits per year.

At the same time, without appropriate language translation services or properly translated materials, limited English-proficient immigrants cannot receive adequate care, as well as State and Federal benefits for which they may be eligible. In the AAPI community, 76 percent of Hmong Americans, 61 percent of Vietnamese Americans, 52

percent of Korean Americans, and 39 percent of Tongans speak limited English. Therefore, eliminating health care disparities in the AAPI community must include data collection, linguistically appropriate and culturally competent services, and access to health insurance.

CAPAC has been working with both the Congressional Hispanic and Black Caucuses on the Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act, which will address ethnic and racial health disparities for all of our community. I will be introducing the Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act, which will address expanding the health care safety net, diversifying the health care workforce, combating diseases that disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities, emphasizing prevention and behavioral health; and promoting the collection and dissemination of data and enhance medical research, provide interpreters and translation services in the delivery of health care.

Mr. Speaker, in California a Hmong man was going to the hospital to have his right leg amputated in surgery. And the doctor, in order to confirm whether he had the right leg pointed out, spoke to the gentleman before surgery and asked him if this is the correct leg, and the gentleman did not understand. He just nodded. When he came to from anesthesia after the surgery, he found that his good leg was amputated. And because of lack of translations and lack of linguistic services, this man became more disabled than he should have been.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), a great friend and advocate.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed listening to this story of the tapestry of the Asian American Pacific Islander community in America; and that tapestry, of course, consists of quite a number of threads. I would like to add one thread to this great story of this important part of the American tapestry.

And that story began on March 30, 1942, on Bainbridge Island, Washington, actually the island where I live. On that day, a young 2½-year-old named Frank became one of the first Americans of Japanese descent to be rounded up by our military and forced to leave his home. We have a picture here. Actually, it is a pretty historic picture. These were the first Japanese Americans to be interned during World War II. They left the dock on Bainbridge Island en masse, surrounded back up here, though we do not see them in the picture, of soldiers with bayonets; and they were marched down into a boat and taken to Seattle and eventually to Manzanar.

□ 2145

Obviously, at that time, after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, our Nation was really living under a cloud of uncertainty when, along with Frank, 226 other men and women, families left

the dock at Bainbridge Island, and they were the first imprisoned at Manzanar. Eventually, 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent were stripped of their very basic rights and freedoms guaranteed to every American under the Constitution, and most spent the duration of the war in these camps.

It took a long time for Americans to come to grips with this, come to grips with these injustices as part of our history. But it is important to remember them lest we forget and allow fear and anxiety that is understandable ever to push us over the edge again to darkness that occurred to those people in those years.

Frank is now known as Dr. Kitamoto, a great dentist on Bainbridge Island. Frank is a grown man. He carries the story of this internment with a very quiet strength and courage. And he knows that while we regret those decisions that were made 63 years ago, he does not cast blame. Instead, Dr. Kitamoto has transferred his personal experience into a living history to try to share the wisdom that comes with such a searing experience. He shares his story so that others can learn from this mistake so that we are reminded not to let that happen again.

Frank has a 45-minute slide presentation that he presents to schools throughout the State of Washington, and California, Oklahoma, Connecticut and Idaho, wherever he is invited, and he makes the trip on his own dime. Frank wants to make sure this story is told and told by someone who knows the story.

For over 20 years he has lead the Bainbridge Island Japanese American community as President, and he has worked to create a memorial, a remembrance to this event in our community's history. The Bainbridge Island community put a lot of effort into selecting a name for this memorial and, with care and deliberation, selected a Japanese phrase, "Nidoto Nai Yoni" or "let it not happen again."

I am proud that the history of Dr. Kitamoto has become part of the American story, and I was proud to sponsor legislation that will hopefully make the "Nidoto Nai Yoni" memorial at Pritchard Park an officially recognized part of our national heritage. That bill passed this Chamber last year, we are in the planning phases now, to make this a national memorial. Most of this dock is not here now, but we have just a beautiful memorial planned so that this story can remain part of our national tapestry.

It is my honor to join efforts with Dr. Kitamoto and sit beside him at the dedication ceremony for the memorial. It is my honor now to remember and share this story of a group of Americans whose quiet strength and sacrifice and courage and patriotism of the many sons who served in World War II while their families were in these camps. Their story really is an inspiration for everyone everywhere, and I want to thank the gentleman from

California (Mr. HONDA) for convening this important discussion.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Washington for his great work and also for making sure that the lessons of internment is not only academic, but also personal, and for dedicating sites that will be a hands-on experience for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue on Social Security and, as we continue this debate on Social Security, I want to emphasize the fact that privatizing Social Security will impact the Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders just as it will impact all Americans. We need to protect and secure Social Security for the AAPI community, because Social Security provides retirement security to AAPI families. More than 785,000 AAPIs receive Social Security benefits, and the average monthly benefit for AAPIs is \$716.

Social Security needs a solid source of funding, not a plan that makes the problem worse by draining trillions of dollars away from Social Security. Social Security is a generational promise to honor our parents and Americans who have paid into Social Security for years, and we need to fight to protect and secure the promise of benefits.

On a personal note, my mother, who is 88, has worked all her life. She has worked in the fields, she has worked with my father as a sharecropper in strawberries and, later, she was a domestic worker, taking care of other people's homes and cleaning their homes. All of this work has dignity to it. It provided sufficient revenues to put food on our table. However, she did not have a pension plan. She did not have other plans that would sustain her in her retirement years. She is one of those 90 percent of widows who depend upon Social Security for 90 percent of their income on a monthly basis. It is for those women, for children who have survived family tragedies and became orphans, for those who are disabled, that we submit that Social Security should not be deformed, but perhaps reformed and have a sense of solvency into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to extend my gratitude to the patriotic men and women serving our country in the military, including 60,813 AAPIs serving on active duty in the U.S. armed services, as well as the 28,066 in the Reserves and the National Guard. I also commend and thank the 351,000 AAPI veterans who fought for this country.

I would like to highlight and honor the Filipino veterans who have not been compensated and recognized for their service, which I believe is a national disservice to these brave veterans. As a country, it is our duty to ensure that these veterans have equal access to all of the benefits and treatment that other veterans receive. We believe that our troops should be taken care of when we send them into battle and that they should be given the respect when they return home.

With regard to the Filipino veterans, I stand with my colleagues, the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) and the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) to support their bipartisan legislation, H.R. 302, to restore full benefits to those veterans who fought for our Nation in World War II when they were asked and recruited to become our allies in fighting the Japanese military during World War II. However, this effort has been stalled and frustrated over the years. It is not an issue of who is in the administration, it is an issue of the State Department. I would also ask my colleagues in Congress on both sides of the aisle to take note of this bill that is being sponsored by the gentlemen from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) and (Mr. FILNER), to study it and understand that a promise made should not be a promise broken as it was in 1946, but a promise kept. We have an opportunity in this session to keep that promise, and to make good our word to those veterans who fought alongside of our veterans and soldiers in World War II.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to discuss a few firsts in our community. I am proud of our community's accomplishments, and I would like to recognize many of the AAPI firsts in the areas of art, film, sports, sciences, academia, and politics.

In 1846, Yung Wing, the first Chinese American graduated from Yale University and the first AAPI to graduate from a U.S. college.

In 1863, William Ah Hang, who was a Chinese American, became the first AAPI to enlist in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War.

In 1944, An Wang, a Chinese American who invented the magnetic core memory, which revolutionized computing and served as the standard method for memory retrieval and storage.

In 1946, Wing F. Ong, a Chinese American from Arizona, became the first AAPI to be elected to a statewide office.

In 1948, Victoria Manalo Draves, a Filipino American diver, the first woman to win Olympic Gold Medals in both the ten-meter platform and three-meter springboard events.

In 1956, Dalip Singh Saud, the first Indian American to be elected to Congress. That only became possible after the anti-Asian law that prohibited Asians to become U.S. citizens to become naturalized; after that law was rescinded, Asian Americans were able to participate in the government and the democracy of this country who were not born in this country.

In 1965, Patsy Takemoto Mink, the first Japanese American woman and woman of color elected to Congress who championed Title IX.

In 1985, Haing Ngor, a Cambodian American, became the first AAPI to win an academy award for his role in "The Killing Fields" movie.

In 1985, Ellison Onizuka, a Japanese American, became the first Asian

American Pacific Islander astronaut in space.

I would like to close, Mr. Speaker, by saying that the Asian American Pacific Island community continues to fight for our civil rights as Americans. Even after the internment of the Japanese Americans during World War II, we, as a community, did not grow embittered or cowed by discrimination; instead, we progressed and moved forward. I am proud to be a member of the AAPI community, because we continue to serve as positive contributors to our many communities by investing, investing in education, in business, and cultural opportunities for all Americans.

In closing, this Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, we take pride in our history, our accomplishments, and the promise of our future as we continue to pave the way for a better tomorrow to form a more perfect union in the name of liberty and freedom for all.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the month of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and to pay tribute to the contributions of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, including immigrants, refugees, and natives.

As the Representative of California's 8th District, it is my privilege to represent a strong Asian American and Pacific Islander community that is a vital part of San Francisco's world-renowned diversity.

As the Democratic Leader in Congress, I am proud to join my colleagues in honoring more than 13 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs), representing a diverse community of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences, who make their homes in the United States. Their unique contributions enhance the moral fabric and character of our great country.

As we celebrate the significant progress made by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, it is right for us to honor the memory of great leaders of the AAPI community who have recently passed away—including Fred Korematsu, who dared to challenge the U.S. government over the Japanese internment camps, John Tsu, former chair for the White House Initiative on AAPIs and longtime community activist, Patrick Okura, a great civil rights leader and Japanese American internee, and Magdaleno Duenas, a Filipino veteran and community leader.

Mr. Speaker, let us remember our former colleague and my dear friend Congressman Robert Matsui, who despite imprisonment in an internment camp during World War II, never lost faith in our country. He went on to become a national champion for all of America's seniors, and the first Asian-American to serve in the leadership of the House of Representatives.

Their legacies are part of the ongoing struggle of all Asian American and Pacific Islanders, who, in spite of having to overcome great hardship and discrimination, maintain an abiding and unbreakable belief in the promise of our country, and move forward to make remarkable contributions to our country.

In memory of these great figures in the history of our Nation, it is only fitting that this year's theme for Asian Pacific American Herit-

age Month is 'Liberty and Freedom for All.' Each of these individuals leaves us with a legacy that still burns to be fulfilled. For despite the great progress that we have made, we still have a long way to go to ensuring equality and expanding opportunities so that all Americans have a chance to achieve their full potential. Their work will continue on in all of us.

This year we also commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Immigration Act of 1965, and the 30th Anniversary of the Refugee Assistance Act of 1975. These laws demonstrate our national commitment to serving as a beacon of hope for all those in search of the opportunity and freedom that are the promises of America. In the three decades since the signing of the Refugee Assistance Act, the United States has provided shelter to millions of refugees escaping persecution, tyranny, and often, unspeakable tragedies. Each time we look into the face of diversity, we see great heroism and personal dignity.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage month, let us rededicate ourselves to answer their enduring call to service, and fight for justice in our country.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. It is during this month that we commemorate the significant contributions that the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community has made to our country.

I would like to join my colleagues on the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, of which I am a member, and which is chaired by my colleague, Mr. HONDA of California. This bipartisan and bicameral caucus has been active in raising awareness about the concerns and issues that face the Asian American and Pacific Islander community today.

There are more than 12 million Asian American and Pacific Islanders in the United States, including about 275,000 in my home state of Maryland. Asian Pacific Americans also have the most diverse background of any minority population, tracing their roots to almost fifty different countries and ethnic groups.

Today, Asian Pacific Americans play an important role in every aspect of American life—as authors and artists, as business leaders, as political leaders, as military leaders, as scientists and innovators, as athletes, and in virtually every other aspect of American society.

In addition to recognizing the important role that Asian Pacific Americans play in our country, this month's celebration is also a time to remember significant historical contributions that Asian Pacific Americans have made in our Nation's history. From the building of our transcontinental railroads to fighting on behalf of our Nation, Asian Pacific Americans have contributed greatly to the American tapestry.

This year's theme for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is "Liberty and Freedom for All." This spirit was embodied in Representative Robert Matsui, who passed away in December, and to whom I wish to pay tribute. The House of Representatives and the country as a whole suffered a great loss with the passing of Bob Matsui, a dedicated leader who served with distinction for 13 terms in the House and was chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

During his career, Bob Matsui was an active member of the Asian Pacific American community, working to achieve redress for Japanese Americans who were placed in intern-

ment camps after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Congressman Matsui himself was placed in the Tule Lake internment camp along with his family in 1942. He was later instrumental in securing the passage of the Japanese-American Redress Act as well as in ensuring a monument to Japanese-American patriotism during World War II.

Representative Matsui's experience demonstrates the determination and perseverance that characterized Asian Pacific Americans during their time here in the United States, oftentimes overcoming discrimination, language and cultural barriers.

I am pleased Americans have so much to benefit from as a result of our diverse society. We continue to learn from each other and share each other's traditions, history, and culture.

That is why it gives me great pleasure today to recognize the significant advances and contributions made by the Asian Pacific American Community to our country during Asian Pacific Heritage month.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Asian Pacific Heritage Week.

I am especially proud to do so because I am privileged to represent some of the most important Asian Pacific American communities in Los Angeles, California, including Chinatown, Little Tokyo, Filipinotown, and a portion of the Korean-American community. These historic California communities are constant reminders of the vibrancy and vitality of Asian Pacific Islanders and their significant contributions to our nation.

Secretary of Transportation, former Representative Norman Y. Mineta from California, was one of the first to work towards establishing a time of national recognition of the accomplishments of Asian Pacific Islander Americans. In June of 1977, he and his colleague, Representative Frank Horton of New York, introduced the first House resolution that called upon the President to proclaim the first 10 days of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter signed a joint resolution declaring May 4–10 as National Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. And in 1990, President George H. W. Bush expanded the celebration to the entire month of May. The month of May was chosen for this special commemoration since it corresponds with the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States in May of 1843.

"Asian Pacific American" is a political appellation that encompasses the many ethnic groups that exist in the API community. The term helps give expression to this historically, culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse group while at the same time recognizing common experiences in American history.

Mr. Speaker, let me take a few minutes to highlight a few of the important events in the lives of my Asian Pacific American constituents. In Little Tokyo, one event was the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Little Tokyo Service Center, in which I had the honor to participate. For 25 years, the Little Tokyo Service Center, a nonprofit charitable organization serving Asian and Pacific Islanders throughout Los Angeles County, has been an important resource for the residents of this diverse community. Currently, Little Tokyo Service Center sponsors over a dozen community and social service programs, with over

40 paid staff and hundreds of volunteers who provide competent and compassionate services in seven different languages. The services provided by Little Tokyo Service Center include individual and family counseling, support groups, transportation and translation services, an emergency caregiver program, crisis hotlines, and consumer education.

Little Tokyo Service Center is also the sponsor of several major community development projects in the Los Angeles area, including the construction and management of Casa Heiwa, a 100-unit affordable housing project for individuals and families; the rehabilitation of one of our city's historical landmarks into the Union Center for the Arts; and the development of Pacific Bridge, a housing complex for adults with developmental challenges.

Another noteworthy event took place last year when I was honored to recognize the 100th anniversary of *The Rafu Shimpo*. The success of this bilingual English-Japanese newspaper, founded in Los Angeles and published, distributed, and read avidly in my congressional district, is another milestone in the rich history of the Japanese-American community.

The history of *The Rafu Shimpo* is an important part of both American and Japanese American history and heritage. In April 1903, three young men, Rippo Iijima, Masaharu Yamaguchi, and Seiji Shibuya produced in Los Angeles the first mimeographed news bulletin for the Japanese-speaking community. In 1914, under the new management of Henry Toyosaku (H.T.) Komai, the newspaper began to grow. In 1926, an English language section was added with the help of a 20-year-old UCLA education major, Louise Suski. By 1932, the English section became a daily feature.

On April 4, 1942, *The Rafu Shimpo* ceased publication as Americans of Japanese descent were forcibly and shamefully removed to desert internment camps. At the end of the war in 1945, while other Japanese Americans were released, H.T. Komai continued to be detained in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Nevertheless, the Komai family's dedication to publishing *The Rafu Shimpo* persevered. H.T.'s son, Akira Komai, with a \$1,500 loan from three staff members, rebuilt the newspaper.

The newspaper grew rapidly from a circulation of 500 in 1946, to 20,000 over the next 30 years. Today, H.T.'s grandson, Michael Komai, serves as the third generation publisher, a position he has held since 1983. The award-winning daily has over 45,000 readers and prevails as the premier news source for the Los Angeles area Japanese American community.

Two years ago, I was also honored to recognize the 100th anniversary of *Fugetsu-Do*, a family-run bakery in my congressional district. Starting in 1903, Seiichi Kito and his family, later including Roy Kito, began working in a small shop to produce batches of mochi, maju, and other Japanese sweets. In 1942, when the Kito family was forced to relocate to the Heart Mountain, Wyoming internment camp, the family business was closed. At the end of the war, the Kito family returned to Los Angeles and reopened the doors of *Fugetsu-Do*. Today, Brian Kito, the grandson of Seiichi Kito and the son of Roy Kito, continues the legacy of *Fugetsu-Do* and continues to serve the Little Tokyo community.

And, of course, there is the wonderful celebration of Japanese culture and tradition dur-

ing Nisei Week, culminating with the annual parade.

I am also very proud to represent many members of the Korean-American community and to work with this important constituency that greatly contributes to the Los Angeles area and our nation as a whole.

In 1903, Korean immigrants began arriving in the U.S. in 3 distinct waves. The first wave was recruited for back-breaking work on the sugar plantations of Hawaii. The second wave of Koreans arrived after World War II and again after the Korean War. In the 1960's, more Korean immigrants came to the U.S. seeking increased educational opportunities. Many in this last group were medical professionals who came to fill the shortage of health care workers in our inner cities. These immigrants have helped revitalize declining neighborhoods and have been an economic stimulus through small business entrepreneurship. Korean Americans have also made their influence felt in international trade, the fashion industry, and other community businesses such as restaurants. Still others make significant contributions in professions ranging from the arts to medicine and the sciences. Last year I was proud to help honor the 100th anniversary of Korean-American immigration to the United States with a statement on the floor of the House of Representatives and to participate in their annual Harvest Moon Festival parade in Los Angeles.

And, of course, I am privileged to represent Los Angeles's Chinatown, perhaps the Asian Pacific American group with the oldest and best known story in American history.

Immigrants from China first came to southern California in the late 1850's to help build wagon roads and lay railroad tracks across the west. Initially barred from owning property, many Chinese eventually settled near Olvera Street in rented homes and storefronts used for hand laundries, herb shops and markets in downtown Los Angeles. In the 1930's, this neighborhood of approximately 3000 Chinese was uprooted to make way for the construction of Union Station on Alameda Street.

Chinese families and merchants banded together as the Los Angeles Chinatown Corporation to create a "new Chinatown" on Broadway. Since second-generation Chinese could own property, American-born Peter Soo Hoo led the group in purchasing a railroad storage yard they turned into a traditional Chinese-looking, tile-fringed pedestrian plaza. This "New Chinatown" became one of America's first shopping malls and was an immediate success. Restaurants and shops abounded, and at night the neighborhood came to life with colorful lights, music and street entertainers.

In the 1970's, waves of new Chinese immigrants led an ethnic population shift eastward to the San Gabriel Valley. The original Chinatown, however, retains its historical significance and vitality. To help stimulate its renewal and make this historic area accessible to more southern Californians, the Los Angeles delegation is working to bring the Gold Line through Chinatown.

Among the many other exciting things happening in Chinatown is the Chinese American Museum. In December of 2003, I was pleased to join the Chinese community to celebrate the Grand Opening of the museum, located at Olvera Street, the birthplace of Los Angeles. The Chinese American Museum is in the

Garnier Building, which was erected in the 1890's for the exclusive use of the Chinese community. During those early years, the Garnier building housed schools, temples, churches and businesses. And, of course, the annual Chinese New Year parade and dragon dance culminates a week of celebration of Chinese culture and history.

And finally, in 2003, with other Members of Congress, I was pleased to attend a recognition ceremony in honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander veterans and current service members who are defending our country in the armed services. Among those being honored were members of the legendary 442nd Infantry Army Regiment, which sustained a higher rate of casualties during World War II than any other unit.

This ceremony was one more reminder of the enormous contributions and sacrifices made to this country by the members of our Asian Pacific American communities.

It is truly an honor to join my colleagues during Asian Pacific Heritage Month to recognize the many heroic and positive contributions of the API community to our American society.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I am proud to join our nation in celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. This is a time to recognize the enormous contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to our society. The United States is a country of immigrants, known for its diversity. Asian Pacific Americans have increased that diversity, adding their unique experiences to our culture. I am proud that my home state of California has a larger population of Asian-Americans than anyplace else in the country.

It is important to renew our commitment to serving the specific needs of this community. Congress must not only reflect and acknowledge the past, but also look forward to meeting the future needs of a growing population. We need to work together to make the American dream a reality. Improving access to educational opportunities, enacting comprehensive immigration reform, and reducing health disparities should be priority initiatives. The theme of this year's Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is "Liberty and Freedom for All". This month serves as a reminder that we should all strive to make this theme a reality for every American.

We should also acknowledge the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans. My district in particular has benefited from their service and leadership. There are several prominent Asian Pacific Americans who dedicate themselves to improving our communities in southern California. They are a source of strength and inspiration to all of us. I would like to recognize someone who has provided invaluable service.

Laura Lee, of Cerritos, is committed to improving her community by helping those around her. She was elected to the Cerritos City Council in March 2003. However, this barely acknowledges the extent of her public service. She has made Cerritos her home since 1979, and in that time, has built an extensive list of accomplishments. Laura has provided her service and expertise to the American Red Cross, the ABC School District Legislative/Policy Advisory Committee, the Su Casa Domestic Abuse Network, and the Southern California Chinese Woman's League.

Additionally, she is very active professionally as a real estate broker. She has used this experience to take on leadership roles with the California Association of Realtors, the Rancho Southeast Association of Realtors, and the Cerritos College Real Estate Department. Laura Lee has contributed greatly to the growth of our economy, the diversity of our culture, and the quality of our education. She is someone we can all look to as a role model.

This month is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the Asian Pacific American community. They are a valuable asset to our diverse culture that should be recognized.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the Nation in celebrating Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month. The month of May is a time to celebrate the achievements of Asian American men and women who have made remarkable contributions to our country.

As a member of the Congressional Asian Pacific Islander American Caucus, I am proud to pay tribute to the 120,000 individuals of Asian descent I represent in California's 32nd Congressional District. Rosemead, Monterey Park and other cities throughout my district have experienced first hand the economic and cultural contributions of the Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

Since the earliest days of this country, people from all cultures have immigrated to our Nation seeking the promise of freedom, opportunity, and the American dream. As an integral part of our society, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are leaders in public service, government, science, law, education, athletics, and the arts. As business entrepreneurs, Asian and Pacific Islander are helping to strengthen our economy and our communities through their hard work and ingenuity. As patriots, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans continue to risk their lives defending liberty. We are grateful for the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform and for their families who love and support them.

The commitment of Asian and Pacific Islanders to family, community and hard work has helped to shape our Nation for many generations. This year the country suffered a great loss at the death of Congressman Robert Matsui, who exemplified these qualities. A fellow Californian, Congressman Matsui served his district and the Nation 26 years in Congress with great distinction and honor. Formerly a Japanese-American prisoner during World War II, Congressman Matsui was a great advocate and champion of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. His work effort, faith, and determination were a constant source of inspiration for me.

I join with all Americans in celebrating the Asian and Pacific Islander American culture, and I encourage every citizen to recognize the many contributions of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans to the diversity of the Nation.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) to recognize May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. As a member of the caucus' executive committee and the chairman of its Immigration Task Force, I want to honor the many achievements and contributions of the more than thirteen million Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander descent in our country.

Back in 1978, my friends and colleagues, Senator DANIEL K. INOUE, former Senator

Spark Matsunaga, former Representative Frank Horton and former Representative Norm Mineta helped establish the first 10 days of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. Subsequent efforts were made to extend the week-long celebration to a month-long event. In the 102nd Congress, I was an original cosponsor of legislation signed into law that designated May of each year as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

I am blessed to serve the First Congressional District of Hawaii which is comprised primarily of Asian Pacific Americans (APA). It's an inspiring and empowering sight for other APAs from around the country to see. I know I say this every year, but I feel that it needs to be repeated. There is a special strength and resilience embodied in Hawaii's unique cultural mix: we have chosen to be defined by our diversity rather than divided by our differences. That resolve to work together with Aloha can serve as an example to the rest of the country.

While we can look at APA Heritage Month as a time to recognize and celebrate many individual accomplishments, we must also take action. My colleagues and I are committed to improving the lives of all APAs by working on issues of importance to our community, such as fighting to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities, defending civil liberties, protecting Social Security, and ensuring educational opportunities for our children. These are the principles that reflect this year's theme, "Liberty and Freedom for All."

This year's theme represents the past and ongoing contributions of APAs, such as Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink who dedicated her life to economic and social justice, Congressman Robert Matsui, who's internment experience during World War II helped shape his belief that every American is entitled to basic civil rights despite their ethnicity, and Japanese American soldiers who fought during World War II, such as Senator DANIEL K. INOUE.

Throughout our nation's history, APAs have made and continue to make major contributions in areas such as business, civil liberties, culture and arts, education, medicine, technology and politics. By the year 2050, there will be an estimated 33.4 million U.S. residents who will identify themselves as Asian alone, which will comprise 8 percent of the total population. This is a projected 213 percent increase of APAs between 2000 and 2050. These statistics reflect the growing significance of the APA community, its growing role in the development of public policy, and its cultural contributions that helps us to celebrate our diversities. I extend my heartfelt aloha to the APA community and look forward to celebrating APA Heritage Month.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, which commemorates the significant contributions of Asian Pacific Americans throughout our country's history. America draws its strength from its tremendous diversity. The contributions to our country—to the American culture and experience—by Asian Pacific Americans are numerous, and we are a much better country as a result.

I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership in the Asian Pacific American Caucus and our Tri-Caucus, the Asian Pacific American Caucus, the Hispanic Caucus, and the Congressional Black Caucus. It is a privilege to be part of the Tri-Caucus.

Today, I want to recognize the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans in my district, the Ninth Congressional District of California, the East Bay of Northern California, and commend them for their dedicated service and vision in making life better for those in our community and our Nation. Asian Pacific Americans have long played a crucial role in the life and history of the East Bay. The region's identity has been profoundly shaped by its place in the Pacific Rim.

However, today Asian Americans face a wide variety of challenges, including access to educational opportunities and community resources. I specifically want to highlight the work being done in my own district by the East Bay Asian Youth Center (EBAYC) and the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC), in their efforts to empower the Asian American community and improve their standard of living.

The East Bay Asian Youth Center inspires Asian American youth and families by providing leadership and educational opportunities. Everyday EBAYC (ee-BAY-see) demonstrates that cultural diversity is a powerful agent for progress. They run a youth sports program, have founded a health center, and coordinate a video productions program that was awarded Honorable Mention at the Oakland International Film Festival. EBAYC also facilitates partnerships to provide health, social, security improvements, and after-school services at schools. Moreover, EBAYC engages families through the creation of Parent Action Committees (PACs). Over 500 Asian, Latino, and African-American parents are involved in these PACs in schools where no parent organization had previously existed. These PACs have been enormously effective, fomenting positive change in local schools. For example, one PAC was able to decrease truancy by 40 percent at a middle school that was known for its major gang-related and racial violence.

I also want to mention the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation. EBALDC (ee-BALD-see) has created a national model to promote affordable housing. Since its inception, it has created over 700 units of affordable apartments for low income families and seniors. It is one of the Bay Area's—and the Nation's—most respected community developers. EBALDC has developed nearly 200,000 square feet of retail, office and childcare space, two of which I want to highlight: (1) the Asian Resource Center, a facility that provides key community services to the APA community in Oakland Chinatown and, (2) Preservation Park, a beautifully restored Victorian neighborhood block that is home to a countless number of non-profit organizations and small businesses. In addition, EBALDC spearheads an Individual Development Account (IDA) savings program, by which more than 10 percent of the IDA participants have used their savings to buy their first homes. Given that the Bay Area's real estate market makes it one of the least affordable cities in the Nation, it has made a huge impact within our community, EBALDC helps individuals discover and develop the resources to realize their dreams—of owning affordable homes and starting new businesses.

Immigrants face many obstacles today, and organizations like EBALDC and EBAYC help their clients to conquer their problems. These are just a few specific examples of the impact

that APAs have had in my district. I want to salute the achievements of these two organizations tonight.

I believe that it is also very important to celebrate the accomplishments of a hero for many of us, someone who has tirelessly devoted her life to make our Nation better, Lillian Galedo. Ms. Galedo is the Executive Director for Filipinos for Affirmative Action (FAA). This year she will be celebrating her "Silver Anniversary" with the organization, having served 25 years with FAA.

During her tenure, Ms. Galedo has spearheaded several initiatives to advocate on behalf of the Filipino American community, especially in the East Bay. Today, Filipinos continue to be among the top three groups immigrating to the U.S., constituting one of the largest Asian populations in California. FAA runs several youth programs, offers services to new immigrants and engages in several community campaigns, working for the rights of immigrants, Filipino-American airport screeners and WWII veterans. FAA is truly an exemplary grassroots organization, and Ms. Galedo has been at the forefront of encouraging civic participation and fighting for the civil rights of the community. Ms. Galedo is a woman warrior—passionate and articulate—and an inspiration for many Asian Americans.

I also want to recognize the contributions of those who have left us, but who have left an indelible mark in our Nation's history.

Tonight I honor the memory and the legacy of a very good friend, my dear colleague Congressman Robert Matsui. He made such a great impact in this body, and tonight as we celebrate APA Heritage Month, I want to remind everyone of Bob's great legacy. Bob's passing is a bitter blow to all of us. But his life and the things he achieved for all of us will live forever as a testament to a life well-lived. I also want to recognize his wife, DORIS, who has done an incredible job in the past few months, in carrying on his legacy and reflecting the view and the future that Bob would have for the country.

I also want to highlight the achievements of Fred Korematsu, a courageous champion of the civil rights movement and a role model for Asian Americans. During his life, Mr. Korematsu touched the lives of countless people, shedding light on a past injustice that was forgotten and ignored. Mr. Korematsu was a central figure within the controversy of Japanese internment during World War II, during which he was arrested for demanding no more than what every American is entitled to—his basic human rights. Mr. Korematsu defied the order to go to the Japanese-American internment camps because he believed it wasn't right. His case changed legal history and resulted in an apology by the U.S. for its wrongdoings, as well as reparations to 120,000 living Japanese-Americans.

Mr. Speaker, as a Nation, we must embrace the cultures that have worked to advance the needs of all Americans and have helped to define what it means to be American. So as a proud member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I am privileged to join the gentleman from California tonight to make sure that our entire country understands why we are celebrating APA Heritage Month. Let us make sure that we represent Asian Pacific Americans every month, each and every day as we develop our policies and our legislation that ensure liberty and justice for all.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 109TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLMANN of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to take what will be a brief look back at the first 100 or so days of activity in this House of Representatives. While each new session of Congress holds great promise, it is the actions that that Congress takes that determine whether or not that Congress has been successful. Our success has been as a result, in my mind, of the leadership of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TOM DELAY), the majority leader, whose responsibility it is to shepherd legislation through this body.

In a community and a town where exaggeration and hyperbole, overreaching and puffery has been elevated to a state of art, you have to be very careful to not indulge in those tendencies, although some in this Chamber have on occasion, rare occasions, I suspect, done that. But if you are looking at facts, if you are talking about things that have been accomplished, then you are less likely to be accused of puffing and of exaggeration.

So during this next 60 minutes, my colleagues and I who have joined me tonight will spend this hour talking about things that we have accomplished, the things that we have done, the good we have done, how it will impact America and Americans, if the bulk of this legislation does, in fact, reach the President's desk. So to start us off tonight, I have asked my good colleague and fellow freshman, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), to share with us what is on her mind. So I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me. It is a real honor to be a Member of this freshman class. Folks keep telling us we are a good group, and we know that from ourselves.

I rise this evening to support our majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY). Congressman DELAY has done a remarkable job in providing strong leadership and guiding the Congress to make many positive changes for our country. It is a shame that Democratic party leaders are playing partisan games in order to distract the American people from what is important, all of the progress that is being made in this session of

Congress. But rest assured, they will not distract my colleagues and me from getting the job done. It is time for the Democratic leaders to put partisan politics aside and work together on the issues that really matter to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to report that the first 100 days of the 109th Congress have been a tremendous success. We have been working hard in a bipartisan fashion to make many positive changes for America.

Mr. Speaker, I get up lots of mornings 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock and leave home, and I am always astonished at how many people there are on the highways of western North Carolina going out to do their jobs, and I think those people expect us to do the same thing, I say to the gentleman. That is what they want us to be doing, and that is what we are doing.

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I am proud of that. In the past 4 months, we have fought to reduce taxes and the burdensome rules and regulations that plague hard-working Americans. When those people get up every morning and go to work, they do not want to be burdened with taxes and rules and regulations.

And just last week, the House passed a budget resolution conference report that will implement \$106 billion in tax cuts over the next 5 years. Our fiscally responsible budget funds our top priorities, such as national security and defense, while stimulating our economy and creating jobs.

It also reins in spending and reduces the Federal deficit. You know, with the loss of sense of history and civics, many people have forgotten that the number one role of Federal Government is to provide for the defense of our Nation. If we do not provide for the defense of our Nation, nobody else can or will, no other level of government can. So that has got to be our top priority.

We have also acted to repeal permanently the death tax, which is an unfair burden on thousands of American families, small businesses, and family farms. The death tax has caused many of these small businesses and farms to go out of business. I am happy that we have acted to bury this unreasonable burden.

We have strengthened our national security by passing the REAL ID Act. This bill will require rigorous proof of identity and strong security requirements for all applicants for driver's licenses and State-issued identity cards. The vast majority of the States have recognized the privilege that a driver's license brings.

However, 10 States, and regrettably including my home State of North Carolina, issue valid driver's licenses and identification cards without requiring proof of legal status. And according to the 9/11 Commission report, these travel documents are just as important as weapons are to terrorists. I